

Wednesday, March 13, 2013

Dear Senator Gerrantana, Representative Johnson and Members of the Public Health Committee,

I oppose SB 993 as it is written and would like to amend it to include a mid level provider in the Dental Hygiene Field.

As a baccalaureate candidate a few years ago, I had the privilege of interning for the Department of Public Health's Dental Division. I was assigned the task of researching programs that the elderly utilized for dental care. What my research uncovered was a lack of dental facilities and programs that the elderly could utilize that were affordable and attainable.

A number of social directors and social service directors stated that the elderly needed programs that would come to them, rather than have long waits in clinics that physically they could not handle. A mid level provider would be able to accommodate the faction of this population, by being able to set up in senior centers and other areas where seniors reside. Since there are a number of facilities that already utilize dental hygienists, this next step would seem the more logical one. Seniors' oral health is important as many of their medications cause dental problems that could be eliminated or managed on a basic level. A mid level provider such as the ADHP with the proper education, would be able to provide these services at a much more affordable rate.

I also would like clarity on the EFDA clause. I am not opposed to expanded functions for dental assistants, but would advocate for them providing the educational requirements would ensure the safety of the public. Too many dental assistants are trained in the office with no consistency. Is this what our public wants?

Thank you for your consideration on this matter

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